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HAMLET

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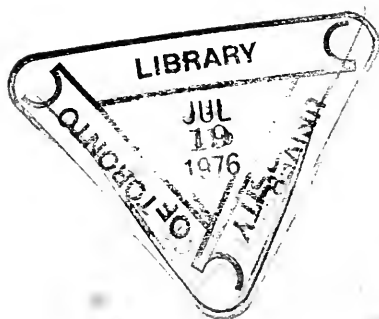
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HAMLET









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HAMLET

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

AS ARRANGED FOR THE STAGE BY

FORBES ROBERTSON

AND PRESENTED AT

THE LYCEUM THEATRE

ON

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1897

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAWES CRAVEN



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THIS acting version of *Hamlet* has been prepared mainly from the "Cambridge" Shakespeare, and Furness's "Variorum" Shakespeare.

I have ventured to transfer the scenes taking place in the house of Polonius to the Castle of Elsinore, in order to avoid as much as possible a change of scene, and to allow more scope and freedom of movement to the characters. Other changes of scene I have made, which may be permitted, seeing that the Acts and Scenes are not marked in the Folios beyond the second Scene of the second Act, and not at all in the Quartos.

JOHNSTON FORBES ROBERTSON.

LYCEUM THEATRE,
Oct. 7, 1897.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CLAUDIUS, <i>King of Denmark</i>	Mr. COOPER CLIFFE			
HAMLET, <i>Son to the former, and Nephew to the present King</i>	Mr. FORBES ROBERTSON			
HORATIO, <i>Friend to Hamlet</i>	Mr. HARRISON HUNTER			
POLONIUS, <i>Lord Chamberlain</i>	Mr. J. H. BARNES			
LAERTES, <i>his Son</i>	Mr. J. BERNARD GOULD			
ROSENCRANTZ	}	Mr. W. GRAHAM BROWN		
GUILDENSTERN			} <i>Courtiers</i>	Mr. FRANK DYALL
OSRICK				
A PRIEST	Mr. CHRIS. WALKER			
MARCELLUS	}	} <i>Officers</i>	Mr. FISHER WHITE	
BERNARDO				Mr. CLIFFORD SOAMES
FRANCISCO, <i>A Soldier</i>	Mr. H. CARTER			
REYNALDO, <i>Servant to Polonius</i>	Mr. R. BOTTOMLEY			
GHOST of <i>Hamlet's Father</i>	Mr. IAN ROBERTSON			
FORTINBRAS, <i>Prince of Norway</i>	Mr. WHITWORTH-JONES			
1ST PLAYER	Mr. JAMES HEARN			
2ND PLAYER	Mr. ELLIOTT BALL			
1ST GRAVEDIGGER	Mr. J. WILLES			
2ND GRAVEDIGGER	Mr. LESLIE VICTOR			
A MESSENGER	Mr. HARRY JOHNSTON			
GERTRUDE, <i>Queen of Denmark, and Mother to Hamlet</i>	Miss GRANVILLE			
OPHELIA, <i>Daughter to Polonius</i>	Mrs. PATRICK CAMPBELL			
PLAYER QUEEN	Miss SYDNEY CROWE			

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Messengers and Attendants.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENERY.

ACT I.

Scene 1.—ELSinORE. A PLATFORM BEFORE THE CASTLE

Scene 2.—A ROOM OF STATE IN THE CASTLE

Scene 3.—THE PLATFORM

Scene 4.—A MORE REMOTE PART

ACT II.

Scene 1.—A ROOM OF STATE IN THE CASTLE

ACT III.

Scene 1.—A ROOM OF STATE IN THE CASTLE

Scene 2.—ANOTHER ROOM IN THE SAME

ACT IV.

Scene 1.—THE ORCHARD

ACT V.

Scene 1.—A CHURCHYARD

Scene 2.—A ROOM IN THE CASTLE

Scene 3.—A HALL IN THE CASTLE





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HAMLET.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle.*

FRANCISCO, *a sentinel.* BERNARDO *enters to relieve him.*

Bernardo :



HO'S there ?

Fran. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

Ber. Long live the king !

Fran. Bernardo ?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'T is now struck twelve: get thee to bed, Francisco.

Fran. For this relief much thanks: 't is bitter cold, And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard ?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Fran. I think I hear them.—Stand! Who's there ?

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier: who hath relieved you?

Fran. Bernardo hath my place. Give you good night. [*Exit.*

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say,—

What! is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.

Mar. What, has this thing appeared again to-night?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says, 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight twice seen of us,—
Therefore, I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night,
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes, and speak to it.

Hor. Tush, tush! 't will not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile,
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we have two nights seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,
When yond same star that's westward from the pole
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself
The bell then beating one.—

Enter Ghost.

Mar. Peace! break thee off: look, where it comes again!

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar: speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the king? Mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like!—It harrows me with fear and wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Question it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,

Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? By Heaven I charge thee,
speak!

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See, it stalks away!

Hor. Stay! speak, speak, I charge thee, speak!
[*Exit Ghost.*]

Mar. 'T is gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? You tremble and look pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on 't?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself.

Such was the very armour he had on
When he the ambitious Norway combated.
So frowned he once when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'T is strange!

Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Hor. This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,

Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land ?

Hor. That can I. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appeared to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Dared to the combat ; in which our valiant Hamlet
Did slay this Fortinbras ; who, by a sealed compact
Did forfeit with his life all those his lands
Which he stood seized of. Now, young Fortinbras
Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
Sharked up a list of lawless resolute,
To recover of us those 'foresaid lands
So by his father lost. And this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations.

Re-enter Ghost.

But, soft ! behold ! lo, where it comes again !
I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion,
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me !

If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me !

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which happily foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak !

Stay, and speak !—Stop it, Marcellus.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan ?

Hor. Do, if it will not stand,

Ber. 'Tis here!

Hor. 'Tis here!

Mar. 'Tis gone! [*Exit* Ghost.]

We do it wrong, being so majestic,al,
To offer it the show of violence ;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started, like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day : and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine.

But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill,
Break we our watch up ; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet ; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE 2.—*A Room of State in the Castle.*

Flourish. Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET,
POLONIUS, LAERTES, Lords and Attendants.

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's
death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe ;
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,

Together with remembrance of ourselves.
 Therefore, our sometime sister, now our queen,
 The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
 Have we, as 't were with a defeated joy,—
 With an auspicious and a dropping eye,
 With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
 In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
 Taken to wife : nor have we herein barred
 Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
 With this affair along : for all, our thanks.
 And now, Laertes, what's the news with you ?
 You told us of some suit ; what is't, Laertes ?

Laer. Dread my lord,
 Your leave and favour to return to France ;
 From whence though willingly I came to Denmark
 To show my duty in your coronation,
 Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France.

King. Have you your father's leave ? What says
 Polonius ?

Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow
 leave
 By laboursome petition ; and, at last,
 Upon his will I sealed my hard consent :
 I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes ; time be thine,
 And thy best graces spend it at thy will.—

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

Ham. [*Aside.*] A little more than kin, and less
 than kind.

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on
 you ?

Ham. Not so, my lord ; I am too much i' the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
 And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
 Do not for ever with thy vailéd lids
 Seek for thy noble father in the dust :

Thou know'st, 't is common; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not
'seems.'

'T is not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,
That can denote me truly; these, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within, which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'T is sweet and commendable in your
nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father:
But you must know your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow: but to perséver
In obstinate condolement, is a course
Of impious stubbornness:
For what we know must be, and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
Take it to heart? We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father: for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne,
And with no less nobility of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,

It is most retrograde to our desire ;
 And we beseech you, bend you to remain
 Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers,
 Hamlet :

I pray thee, stay with us ; go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply :
 Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come ;
 This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
 Sits smiling to my heart : in grace whereof,
 No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
 And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,
 Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt all, but HAMLET.*

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
 Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew ;
 Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! God !
 How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
 Seem to me all the uses of this world !
 Fie on't ! Ah fie ! 'tis an unweeded garden
 That grows to seed ; things rank and gross in
 nature
 Possess it merely. That it should come to this !
 But two months dead,—nay, not so much, not
 two !

So excellent a king ; that was, to this,
 Hyperion to a satyr ; so loving to my mother,
 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth !
 Must I remember ? Why, she would hang on him
 As if increase of appetite had grown
 By what it fed on ; and yet, within a month,—

Let me not think on't,—Frailty, thy name is
woman!—

A little month; or e'er those shoes were old
With which she followed my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears;—why she, even she—
O God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer—married with my
uncle;

My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules; within a month,
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galléd eyes,
She married.

It is not, nor it cannot come to, good;
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue!

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS *and* BERNARDO.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well,
Horatio,—or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant
ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend, I'll change that name
with you.

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?—
Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord,—

Ham. I am very glad to see you. [*To* BERNARDO.]

Good even, sir.

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so:
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself: I know, you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore ?

We'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student ;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio ! the funeral baked
meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio !—

My father—methinks I see my father—

Hor. O, where, my lord ?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.—

Hor. I saw him once, he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw, who ?

Hor. My lord, the king your father.

Ham. The king my father !

Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead waste and middle of the night,
Been thus encountered : a figure like your father,
Arméd at point, exactly, cap-à-pé,
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them : thrice he walked
By their oppressed and fear-surpriséd eyes,
Within his truncheon's length ; whilst they, distilled
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me

In dreadful secrecy impart they did ;
 And I with them the third night kept the watch :
 Where, as they had delivered, both in time,
 Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
 The apparition comes. I knew your father.
 These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this ?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we
 watched.

Ham. Did you not speak to it ?

Hor. My lord, I did ;
 But answer made it none ; yet once, methought,
 It lifted up its head, and did address
 Itself to motion, like as it would speak ;
 But even then the morning cock crew loud,
 And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
 And vanished from our sight.

Ham. 'T is very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honoured lord, 't is true ;
 And we did think it writ down in our duty,
 To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
 Hold you the watch to-night ?

Mar., Ber. We do, my lord.

Ham. Armed, say you ?

Mar., Ber. Armed, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe ?

Mar., Ber. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then, saw you not his face ?

Hor. O ! yes, my lord ; he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, looked he frowningly ?

Hor. A countenance more in sorrow than in
 anger.

Ham. Pale, or red ?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fixed his eyes upon you ?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amazed you.

Ham. Very like, very like. Staid it long?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell
a hundred.

Mar., Ber. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw 't.

Ham. His beard was grizzled? no?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silvered.

Ham. I will watch to-night :
Perchance, 't will walk again.

Hor. I warrant it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto concealed this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still ;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue :
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well :
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves ; as mine to you : Farewell.

[*Exeunt* HORATIO, MARCELLUS and BER-
NARDO.]

My father's spirit—in arms ;—all is not well ;
I doubt some foul play : 'would, the night were
come !

Till then, sit still, my soul.—Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's
eyes. [Exit.]

Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessaries are embarked : farewell ;
And, sister, as the winds give benefit

And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that ?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood ;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute ;
No more.

Oph. No more but so ?

Laer. Perhaps he loves you now ;
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
The virtue of his will : but you must fear,
His greatness weighed, his will is not his own ;
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself ; for on his choice depends
The safety and the health of this whole state ;
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon.

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
Whilst, like a puffed and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads
And recks not his own rede.

Laer. O, fear me not.
I stay too long,—but here my father comes :

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace ;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes? aboard, aboard, for shame!

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stayed for. There,—my blessing
with thee;

[*Laying his hand on LAERTES' head.*

And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou charácter. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar;
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatched, unfledged comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
Bear't that the opposéd may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
For the apparel oft proclaims the man.
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all,—to thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell; my blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you: go, your servants
tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Oph. 'T is in my memory locked,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell.

[*Exit.*

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought :
'T is told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you ; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.
If it be so (as so 't is put on me,
And that in way of caution), I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly
As it behoves my daughter and your honour.
What is between you ? Give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late, made many
tenders
Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection ? Pooh ! you speak like a green girl
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them ?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you : think yourself a baby ;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more
dearly ;
Or you'll tender me a fool.

Oph. My lord, he hath importuned me with love
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it ; go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech,
my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows : these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
Even in their promise as it is a-making,—
You must not take for fire. This is for all,—
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure

As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
 Look to 't, I charge you : come your ways.

Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE 3.—*The Platform.*

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly ; it is very cold.

Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.

Ham. What hour now ?

Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.

Mar. No, it is struck.

Hor. Indeed ? I heard it not : it then draws near
 the season

Wherein his spirit held his wont to walk.

*[A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off,
 within.]*

What does this mean, my lord ?

Ham. The king doth wake to-night, and takes
 his rouse,

Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels ;
 And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
 The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
 The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom ?

Ham. Ay, marry, is 't :

But to my mind,—though I am native here,
 And to the manner born,—it is a custom
 More honoured in the breach than the observance.
 This heavy-headed revel, east and west
 Makes us traduced and taxed of other nations :
 They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
 Soil our addition ; and, indeed, it takes

From our achievements, though performed at
height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.

Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord! it comes.

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us:—
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damned,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from
hell,

Be thy intents wicked, or charitable?
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O answer me,
Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell
Why thy canonised bones, hearséd in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urned,
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature,
So horribly to shake our disposition,
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

[*The Ghost beckons.*]

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removéd ground:
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak: then will I follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?

I do not set my life at a pin's fee ;
 And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
 Being a thing immortal as itself ?
 It waves me forth again :—I'll follow it.

Hor. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my
 lord,

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
 That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
 And there assume some other horrible form
 Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
 And draw you into madness ?

Ham. It waves me still :—go on, I'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Hor. Be ruled ; you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
 And makes each petty artery in this body
 As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.—

[*The Ghost beckons.*

Still am I called.—Unhand me, gentlemen,—

[*Breaking from them.*

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that let's me :—
 I say, away !—Go on, I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost and HAMLET.*

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow ; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after. To what issue will this come ?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it.

Mar. Nay, let's follow him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE 4.—*A more remote Part.**Enter Ghost and HAMLET.*

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? Speak! I'll
go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not; but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt
hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit,
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine;
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood.—List, list, O list!—
If thou didst ever thy dear father love,—

Ham. O God!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural
murder.

Ham. Murder?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is,
But this, most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as
 swift
As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt: now,
 Hamlet, hear.
'T is given out that, sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forgéd process of my death
Rankly abused; but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O my prophetic soul!
My uncle!

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,—
Won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
But, soft! methinks, I scent the morning air:
Brief let me be.—Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of curséd hebenon in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distilment, whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, and queen, at once despatched;
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.

Ham. O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!

Ghost. If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not ;
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
 A couch for luxury and damned incést.
 But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
 Against thy mother aught : leave her to Heaven,
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once !
 The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
 And gins to pale his uneffectual fire :
 Adieu, adieu, adieu ! remember me. [Exit.

Ham. O all you host of heaven ! O earth !—What
 else ?
 And shall I couple hell ? O fie !—Hold, hold, my
 heart,

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
 But bear me stiffly up !—Remember thee !
 Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
 In this distracted globe. Remember thee !
 Yea, from the table of my memory
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
 All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past
 That youth and observation copied there ;
 And thy commandment all alone shall live
 Within the book and volume of my brain,
 Unmixed with baser matter : yes, by Heaven !
 O most pernicious woman !
 O villain, villain, smiling, damnéd villain !
 My tables—meet it is, I set it down,
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain ;
 At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark :

[Writing

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word ;
 It is, "Adieu, adieu ! remember me."
 I have sworn 't.

Hor. [Within.] My lord ! my lord !

Mar. [Within.] Lord Hamlet !

Hor. [*Within.*] Heaven secure him !

Mar. [*Within.*] So be it !

Hor. [*Within.*] Illo, ho, ho, my lord !

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy ! come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Mar. How is 't, my noble lord ?

Hor. What news, my lord ?

Ham. O wonderful !

Hor. Good, my lord, tell it.

Ham. No, you will reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.

Mar. Nor I, my lord.

Ham. How say you, then ; would heart of man
once think it ?—

But you'll be secret ?

Hor., Mar. Ay, by Heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all
Denmark,

But he's an arrant knave.

Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from
the grave,

To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right ; you are in the right ;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part :
You, as your business and desire shall point you,
For every man hath business and desire,
Such as it is ; and for my own poor part,
Look you, I will go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my
lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily ;
Yes, 'faith, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,

It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you ;
 For your desire to know what is between us,
 O'ermaster 't as you may. And now, good friends,
 As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
 Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is 't, my lord? we will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen
 to-night.

Hor., Mar. My lord, we will not.

Ham. Nay, but swear 't.

Hor. In faith,

My lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Ham. In deed, upon my sword, in deed.

Ghost [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? Art thou
 there, true-penny?

Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cellarage,—
 Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
 Swear by my sword.

Ghost [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. *Hic et ubique?* then we'll shift our ground,—
 Come hither, gentlemen,
 And lay your hands again upon my sword ;
 Never to speak of this that you have heard,
 Swear by my sword.

Ghost [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous
 strange!

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it wel-
 come.

There are more things in heaven and earth,
 Horatio,

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
 But come;—
 Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
 How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,—
 As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet
 To put an antick disposition on,—
 That you, at such times seeing me, never shall
 With arms encumbered thus, or this head-shake,
 Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
 As, “ Well, well, we know ”;—or, “ We could, an if
 we would ”;—
 Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
 That you know ought of me:—this not to do,
 So grace and mercy at your most need help you,
 Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!—So, gentlemen,
 men,

With all my love I do commend me to you :
 And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
 May do to express his love and friending to you,
 God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together ;
 And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
 The time is out of joint : O curséd spite,
 That ever I was born to set it right !
 Nay, come, let 's go together. [*Exeunt.*



ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room of State in the Castle.*

Enter POLONIUS and REYNALDO.

Polonius :



GIVE Laertes this money, and these notes, Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his music.

Rey.

Well, my lord.

Pol. Farewell !

[*Exit* REYNALDO.]

Enter OPHELIA.

How now, Ophelia ? what's the matter ?

Oph. Alas, my lord, I have been so affrighted !

Pol. With what, i' the name of God ?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber,
Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbraced ;
No hat upon his head ; his stockings fouled,
Ungartered, and down-gyved to his ankle ;
Pale as his shirt ; his knees knocking each other ;
And with a look so piteous in purport

As if he had been looséd out of hell
To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love ?

Oph. My lord, I do not know ;
But, truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he ?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard ;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face
As he would draw it. Long stayed he so :
At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound,
That it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being. That done, he lets me go :
And, with his head over his shoulder turned,
He seemed to find his way without his eyes ;
For out o' doors he went without their help.
And to the last bended their light on me.

Pol. Come, go with me : I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry—
What, have you given him any hard words of late ?

Oph. No, my good lord ; but as you did command,
I did repel his letters, and denied
His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad—
I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
I had not quoted him : I feared he did but trifle,
And meant to wreck thee.

Come,

This must be known which, being kept close, might
move

More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.

Come.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN
and Attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz, and Guilden-
stern !

Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put
him

So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time; so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, opened, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talked of
you:

And, sure I am, two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry and good will
As to expend your time with us awhile,
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey;
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent
To lay our service freely at your feet,

To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosencrantz :

And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changéd son.—Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,
and some Attendants.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My lord, I do think that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O! speak of that ; that do I long to hear.

Pol. My Liege, and Madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night, night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore, since brevity's the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad :
Mad call I it ; for, to define true madness,
What is 't, but to be nothing else but mad ?
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 't is true : 't is true 't is pity ;
And pity 't is 't is true.—A foolish figure :
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him, then ; and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect ;
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause :
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus
Perpend.

I have a daughter ; have, whilst she is mine ;

Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
 Hath given me this : now gather, and surmise :
 —“ To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most
 beautified Ophelia,”—

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase : “ beautified ” is
 a vile phrase ; but you shall hear.—Thus :

“ In her excellent-white bosom, these,” &c.—

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her ?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile ; I will be faith-
 ful.--

[*Reads.*] “ Doubt thou the stars are fire ;
 Doubt, that the sun doth move ;
 Doubt truth to be a liar ;
 But never doubt, I love.

“ O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers, I
 have not art to reckon my groans ; but that I love
 thee best, O, most best, believe it. Adieu.

“ Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this
 machine is to him, HAMLET.”
 This in obedience hath my daughter showed me ;
 And more above, hath his solicitings,
 As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
 All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
 Received his love ?

Pol. What do you think of me ?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you
 think,

If I had played the desk, or table-book ;
 Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb ;
 Or looked upon this love with idle sight :
 What might you think ? No, I went round to work,
 And my young mistress thus I did bespeak :
 “ Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy star ;
 This must not be ” : and then I precepts gave her,
 That she should lock herself from his resort,

Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
 Which done, she took the fruits of my advice ;
 And he, repulséd,—a short tale to make,—
 Fell into a sadness ; then into a fast ;
 Thence to a watch ; thence into a weakness ;
 Thence to a lightness ; and, by this declension,
 Into the madness wherein now he raves,
 And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think 'tis this ?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time, I'd fain know
 that,

That I have positively said, "'Tis so,"
 When it proved otherwise ?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. [*Pointing to his head and body.*] Take this
 from this, if this be otherwise.

King. How may we try it further ?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours
 together

Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him :
 Be you and I behind an arras then ;
 Mark the encounter : if he love her not,
 And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
 Let me be no assistant for a state,
 But keep a farm and carters.

King. We will try it.

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch
 comes reading.

Pol. Away ! I do beseech you, both away :
 I'll board him presently :—O ! give me leave.—

[*Exeunt KING, QUEEN and Attendants.*]

Enter HAMLET, reading.

How does my good Lord Hamlet ?

Ham. Well, God-a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord ?

Ham. Excellent well ; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord ?

Ham. Ay, sir : to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god kissing carrion,—Have you a daughter ?

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun : conception is a blessing ; but not as your daughter may conceive.—Friend, look to 't.

Pol. How say you by that ?—[*Aside.*] Still harping on my daughter :—yet he knew me not at first ; he said, I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone : and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love ; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord ?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my lord ?

Ham. Between who ?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir : for the satirical slave says here, that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams : all of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down ; for yourself, sir, shall grow old as I am : if like a crab you could go backward.

Pol. [*Aside.*] Though this be madness, yet there's method in 't.—Will you walk out o' the air, my lord ?

Ham. Into my grave.

Pol. Indeed, that is out o' the air.—[*Aside.*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.— My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal: except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. [To POLONIUS.] God save you, sir!

[*Exit POLONIUS.*]

Guil. Mine honoured lord!—

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not overhappy; On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. What the news?

Ros. None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near; but your news is not true. Let me question more in particular: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord?

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Ros. Why, then your ambition makes it one: 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God! I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition: for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me; come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Why, anything, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour; I know, the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no.

Ros. What say you?

Ham. Nay, then, I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why ; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises ; and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory ; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestic roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man ! how noble in reason ! how infinite in faculty ! in form and moving how express and admirable ! in action how like an angel ! in apprehension how like a god ! the beauty of the world ! the paragon of animals ! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust ? man delights not me ;—no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said, man delights not me ?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you ; we coted them on the way, and hither are they coming to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome ; his Majesty shall have tribute of me. The adventurous knight shall use his foil and target, and the lover shall not sigh gratis. What players are they ?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

[*Flourish of trumpets within.*]

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore.

Your hands. You are welcome; but my uncle-father, and aunt-mother, are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a hernshaw.

Pol. [*Off.*] Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern;—and you too;—that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swathing-clouts. I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players; mark it.

Re-enter POLONIUS.

You say right, sir: o' Monday morning: 't was then indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon my honour,—

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass,—

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.

Ham. "O Jephthah, judge of Israel," what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why,

"One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he lovéd passing well."

Pol. [*Aside.*] Still on my daughter.

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, masters; welcome all.—O, my

old friend, why, thy face is valanced since I saw thee last: com'st thou to beard me in Denmark? —What! my young lady and mistress! By 'r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to 't like French falconers, fly at anything we see: we'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1st Play. What speech, my good lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once,—but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 't was caviare to the general: but it was an excellent play. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 't was Æneas' tale to Dido. If it live in your memory, begin at this line:—let me see, let me see:

“The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,”
—'t is not so:—it begins with Pyrrhus:

“The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks,”—

So, proceed you.

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken; with good accent, and good discretion.

1st Play. “Anon he finds him

Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command. Unequal matched,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage, strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnervéd father falls.

But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below

As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region : so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Arouséd vengeance set him new a-work ;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars his armour, forged for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.—

Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune ! ”

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barbers, with your beard.—
Pr'ythee say on:—he's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry,
or he sleeps.

Say on : come to Hecuba.

1st Play. “ But who, O, who had seen the mobled
queen ”——

Ham. The mobled queen ?

Pol. That's good ; mobled queen is good.

1st Play. “ Run barefoot up and down, threatening
the flames

With bisson rheum ; a clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood ; and, for a robe,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up ;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pro-
nounced ;

But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made,
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods.”

Pol. Look, whether he has not turned his colour,
and has tears in 's eyes !—Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well ; I'll have thee speak out the
rest of this soon.—Good my lord, will you see the
players well bestowed ? Do you hear, let them be
well used ; for they are the abstract and brief

chronicles of the time : after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you lived.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. God's bodikin, man, much better : use every man after his desert, and who should scape whipping ? Use them after your own honour and dignity : the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs.

Ham. Follow him, friends : we'll hear a play to-morrow. [*Exit POLONIUS, with all the Players except the First.*] Dost thou hear me, old friend ? can you play the Murder of Gonzago ?

1st Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll have it to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in 't, could you not ?

1st Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well.—Follow that lord ; and look you mock him not. [*Exit First Player.*] My good friends [*to ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN*], I'll leave you till night.

Guil. and Ros. Good my lord !

Ham. Ay, so, God bye to you.—

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I !
 Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
 But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
 Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
 That, from her working, all his visage wanned ;
 Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspéct,
 A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
 With forms to his conceit ? and all for nothing !

For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with
tears,

And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant; and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Yet I,

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damned defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the
throat,

As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?

Ha!

'Swounds! I should take it: for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-livered, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or ere this,
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
O, vengeance!

Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave;
That I, the son of a dear father murdered,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!

Fie upon 't! foh! About, my brain!—I have heard
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene

Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaimed their malefactions !
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle : I'll observe his looks ;
I'll tent him to the quick : if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil : and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape ; yea, and, perhaps,
Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this :—The play's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

[*Exit.*



ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Room of State in the Castle.*

KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN and OPHELIA.

King :



AND can you, by no drift of conference,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion?

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted ;

But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Queen. Did he receive you well ?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Queen.

Did you assay him

To any pastime ?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way : of these we told him ;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it. They are about the court ;
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol.

'Tis most true :

And he beseeched me to entreat your majesties,
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart ; and it doth much content me

To hear him so inclined.

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too ;
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 't were by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia.

Her father, and myself,—lawful espials,—
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge ;
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If't be the affliction of his love or no
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you.—
And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness ; so shall I hope, your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit* QUEEN.]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here.—Gracious, so please
you,
We will bestow ourselves.—[*To* OPHELIA.] Read
on this book,
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness.

Pol. I hear him coming : let's withdraw, my lord.
[*Exeunt* KING and POLONIUS.]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question :—
Whether 't is nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them ?—To die,—to sleep,
No more :—and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks

That flesh is heir to,—’t is a consummation
 Devoutly to be wished. To die,—to sleep :—
 To sleep ! perchance to dream :—ay, there’s the
 rub ;

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
 Must give us pause. There’s the respect,
 That makes calamity of so long life :
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
 The oppressor’s wrong, the proud man’s contumely,
 The pangs of despised love, the law’s delay,
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself might his quietus make
 With a bare bodkin ? who would fardels bear,
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
 But that the dread of something after death,—
 The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
 No traveller returns,—puzzles the will,
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have
 Than fly to others that we know not of ?
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all ;
 And thus the native hue of resolution
 Is sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought ;
 And enterprises of great pith and moment,
 With this regard, their currents turn awry,
 And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now !
 The fair Ophelia—Nymph, in thy orisons
 Be all my sins remembered.

Oph. Good my lord,
 How does your honour for this many a day ?

Ham. I humbly thank you ; well, well, well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
 That I have longéd long to re-deliver ;
 I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I ;
 I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honoured lord, you know right well you did ;

And, with them words of so sweet breath composed
As made the things more rich : their perfume lost,
Take these again ; for to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha ! are you honest ?

Oph. My lord !

Ham. Are you fair ?

Oph. What means your lordship ?

Ham. That if you be honest, and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty ?

Ham. Ay, truly : for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness : this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me ; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it : I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery, why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners ? I am myself indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious ; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven ? We are arrant knaves all ; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery.—Where's your father ?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery. Go, farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. O heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings, too, well enough; God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another; you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't, it hath made me mad. I say we will have no more marriages; those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. *[Exit.]*

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue,
sword;

The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That sucked the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
Blasted with ecstasy: O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter KING and POLONIUS.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;

Nor what he spake, though it lacked form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his
soul

O'er which his melancholy sits on brood ;
And I do doubt the hatch, and the disclose
Will be some danger : which for to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down. He shall with speed to England
For the demand of our neglected tribute ;
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on 't ?

Pol. It shall do well ; but yet do I believe
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. Do as you please,
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief : let her be round with him ;
And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference.

For as you said, and wisely was it said,
'T is meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech of vantage. If she find him not,
To England send him ; or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so :
Madness in great ones must not unwatched go.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter HAMLET and three of the Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue ; but if you mouth it as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not

saw the air too much with your hand, thus ; but use all gently : for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise : I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant ; it out-herods Herod : pray you, avoid it.

1st Play. I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor : suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature ; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature ; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve : the censure of the which one, must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man ; have so strutted, and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1st Play. I hope, we have reformed that indifferently with us.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the meantime, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.—Horatio! [Exeunt Players.]

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord,—

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee? Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath sealed thee for herself: for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death:
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,

It is a damnéd ghost that we have seen,
 And my imaginations are as foul
 As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note :
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face ;
 And, after, we will both our judgments join
 In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord :

Ham. They are coming to the play ; I must be
 idle :
 Get you a place.

[*Danish march. A flourish. Enter, with his
 Guard carrying torches, KING, QUEEN,
 POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ,
 GUILDENSTERN, and other Lords atten-
 dant.*]

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet ?

Ham. Excellent, i' faith ; of the chameleon's dish :
 I eat the air, promise-crammed. You cannot feed
 capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet ;
 these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now.—[*To POLONIUS.*]—My
 lord, you played once i' th' university, you say ?

Pol. That did I, my lord ; and was accounted a
 good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact ?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar ; I was killed i' the
 Capitol ; Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital
 a calf there.—Be the players ready ?

Ros. Ay, my lord ; they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my good Hamlet : sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more
 attractive.

Pol. [*To the KING.*] O ho, do you mark that ?

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap ?

[*Lying down at OPHELIA's feet.*]

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O God, your only jig-maker! What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within 's two hours.

Oph. Nay, 't is twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? O heavens, die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by 'r lady, he must build churches then.

Oph. What is the argument of the play?

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow.

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently. [Exit.]

Ham. Is this a prologue or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'T is brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter a King and a Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart
gone round
Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orbéd ground;
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and
moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done.
But woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state.

P. King. Faith, I must leave thee, love, and
shortly too;
My operant powers their functions leave to do;

And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honoured, beloved ; and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou——

P. Queen. O, confound the rest !

Such love must needs be treason in my breast :
In second husband let me be accurst !
None wed the second, but who killed the first.

Ham. [*Aside.*] Wormwood, wormwood.

P. King. I do believe you think what now you
speak ;

But what we do determine oft we break.
So think thou wilt no second husband wed ;
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven
light ;

Sport and repose lock from me day and night ;
Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,—
If, once a widow, ever I be wife !

Ham. If she should break it now ?

P. King. 'T is deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here
awhile :

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*]

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain ;

And never come mischance between us twain. [*Exit.*]

Ham. Madam, how like you this play ?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument ? Is there
no offence in 't ?

Ham. No, no ; they do but jest ; no offence i' the
world.

King. What do you call the play ?

Ham. The Mouse-trap. Marry, how ? Tropically.
This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna :
Gonzago is the Duke's name ; his wife, Baptista.
You shall see, anon ; 't is a knavish piece of work :

but what of that? your majesty, and we, that have free souls, it touches us not: let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are a good Chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying. Begin, murderer, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come: the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;

Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[Pours the poison into the Sleeper's ears.]

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for 's estate.
His name's Gonzago; the story is extant, and writ
in choice Italian. You shall see anon how the
murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What, frightened with false fire?

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light!—away!

All. Lights, lights, lights!

[Exeunt all but HAMLET and HORATIO.]

Ham. "Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep,
Thus runs the world away.
For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was

Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very—peacock.”

Hor. You might have rhymed.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word
for a thousand pounds. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning—

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha!—Come, some music! come, the
recorders!

“For if the king like not the comedy,

Why then, belike,—he likes it not, perdy.”—

Come, some music!

[*Exit* HORATIO.]

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Guil. Good, my lord, vouchsafe me a word with
you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir,—

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is, in his retirement, marvellous dis-
tempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, rather with choler. The
queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit,
hath sent me to you.

Ros. Your behaviour hath struck her into amaze-
ment and admiration. She desires to speak with
you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our
mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of dis-
temper? you do surely bar the door upon your own
liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but "While the grass grows"—the proverb is something musty.

Enter Players with Recorders.

O, the recorders: let me see one.—To withdraw with you:—Why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. It is as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your finger and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. 'S blood, do you think that I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.—

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir!

[*Exit* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 't is like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then I will come to my mother by-and-by.—They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by-and-by.

Pol. I will say so.

[*Exit.*]

Ham. By-and-by is easily said.

'T is now the very witching time of night
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes
out

Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot
blood,

And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft now, to my
mother:—

O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom;
Let me be cruel, not unnatural,
I will speak daggers to her, but use none.

SCENE 2.—*Another Room in the same.*

Enter KING, ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not ; nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you :
I your commission will forthwith despatch,
And he to England shall along with you.
Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage ;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros., Guil.

We will haste us.

[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

King. O! my offence is rank, it smells to heaven :
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murder! What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Then, I'll look up :
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder?—
That cannot be ; since I am still possess'd
Of these effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice ;
But 't is not so above ;
There is no shuffling. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can : what can it not ?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent ?
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death !
O liméd soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make assay :
Bow, stubborn knees ; and, heart with strings of
steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe !

All may be well.

[Retires and kneels.]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying ;
And now I'll do't :—and so he goes to heaven :
And so am I revenged. That would be scanned :
A villain kills my father ; and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread ;
And am I, then, revenged,
To take him in the purging of his soul ?
No.

Up, sword ; and know thou a more horrid hent :
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage ;
At game, a-swearing ; or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't ;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damned and black
As hell, whereto it goes. [Exit.]

King. [Rises and advances.] My words fly up, my
thoughts remain below :
Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [Exit.]

Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.

Pol. He will come straight. Look you lay home
to him :
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear
with,
And that your grace hath screened and stood be-
tween
Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here.
Pray you, be round with him.

Queen. I'll warrant you ; fear me not.

Ham. [Within.] Mother, mother, mother !

Queen. Withdraw, I hear him coming.
 [POLONIUS *hides behind the arras.*]

Re-enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother, what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet?

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so:
 You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife:
 And—would it were not so—you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;
 You go not till I set you up a glass
 Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me?

Help, help, ho!

Pol. [*Behind.*] What, ho! help, help, help!

Ham. How now! A rat? [*Draws.*] Dead, for a ducat, dead!

[*Makes a pass through the arras.*]

Pol. [*Behind.*] O! I am slain. [*Falls and dies.*]

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not:

Is it the king?

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed: almost as bad, good mother,
 As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king!

Ham. Ay, lady, 't was my word.

[*Lifts up the arras and sees POLONIUS.*]

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
 I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;
 Thou find'st, to be too busy is some danger.—
 Leave wringing of your hands: peace, sit you down,
 And let me wring your heart, for so I shall,
 If it be made of penetrable stuff;
 If damnéd custom have not braz'd it so,
 That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag
 thy tongue
 In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act
 That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
 Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose
 From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
 And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows
 As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed,
 As from the body of contraction plucks
 The very soul, and sweet religion makes
 A rhapsody of words: heaven's face doth glow,
 Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
 With tristful visage, as against the doom,
 Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen. Ay me, what act,
 That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?

Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
 The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
 See, what a grace was seated on his brow:
 Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
 An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
 A station like the herald Mercury
 New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
 A combination, and a form, indeed,
 Where every god did seem to set his seal,

To give the world assurance of a man.
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows.

Here is your husband ; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes ?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor ? Ha, have you eyes ?
You cannot call it love ; for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment : and what judgment
Would step from this to this ? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax
And melt in her own fire.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more !
These words like daggers enter in mine ears :
No more, sweet Hamlet !

Ham. A murderer, and a villain ;
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord :—a vice of kings ;
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket.

Queen. No more !

Ham. A king of shreds and patches,—

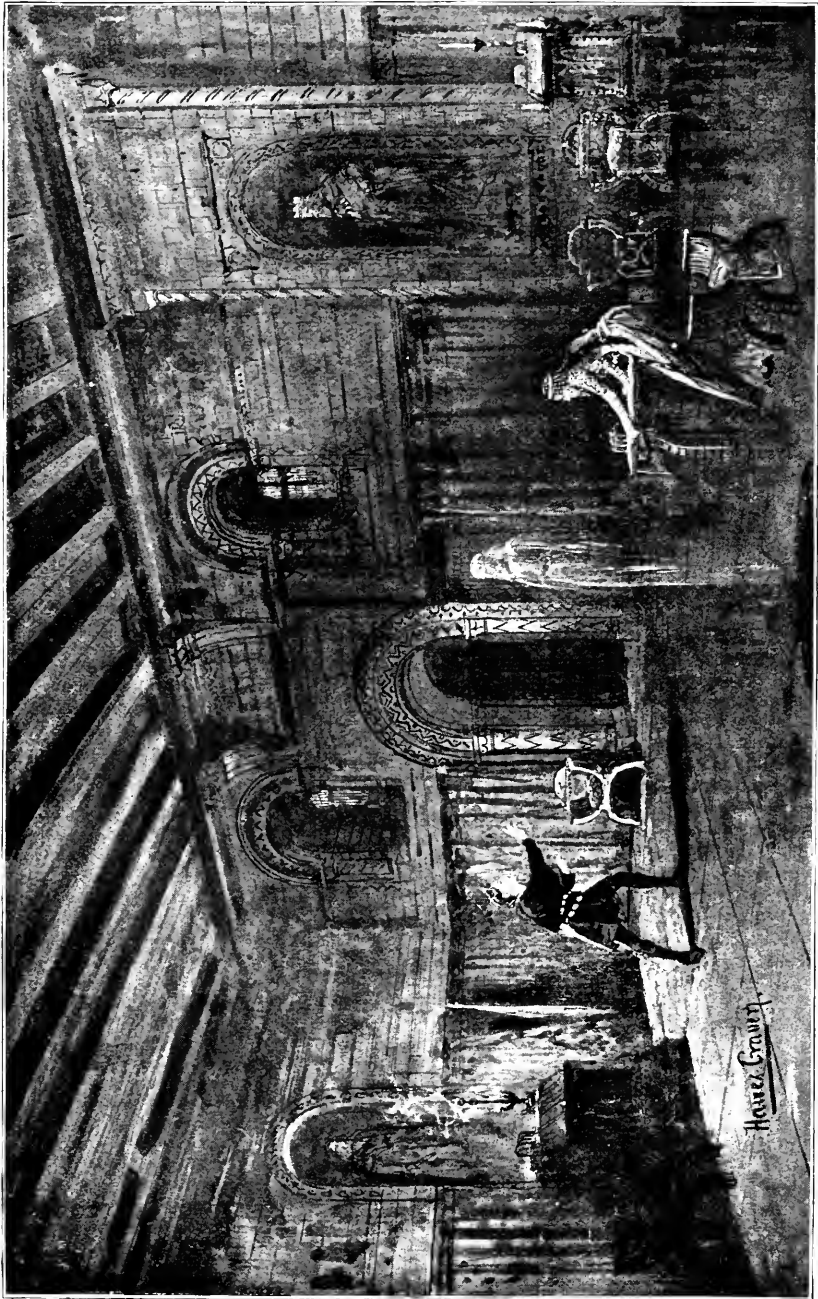
Enter Ghost.

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards !—What would your gracious
figure ?

Queen. Alas ! he's mad.

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command ?
O, say !

Ghost. Do not forget. This visitation



Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
 But, look, amazement on thy mother sits :
 O, step between her and her fighting soul ;
 Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady ?

Queen. Alas, how is 't with you
 That you do bend your eye on vacancy
 And with the incorporal air do hold discourse ?
 O gentle son,

Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
 Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look ?

Ham. On him, on him !—Look you, how pale he
 glares !

His form and cause conjoined, preaching to stones
 Would make them capable.—Do not look upon me ;
 Lest with this piteous action you convert
 My stern effects : then, what I have to do
 Will want true colour ; tears, perchance, for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this ?

Ham. Do you see nothing there ?

Queen. Nothing at all ; yet all that is I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear ?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there ! look, how it steals
 away !

My father in his habit as he lived !

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal !

[*Exit* Ghost.]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain :
 This bodiless creation, ecstasy
 Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy !

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
 And makes as healthful music. It is not madness
 That I have uttered : bring me to the test,
 And I the matter will re-word ; which madness
 Would gambol from.

Confess yourself to Heaven ;
Repent what's past ; avoid what is to come.

Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in
twain !

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good-night : but go not to mine uncle's bed ;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
Once more, good-night :
And when you are desirous to be blessed,
I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,

[*Pointing to* POLONIUS.]

I do repent : but Heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.

So, again, good-night.—

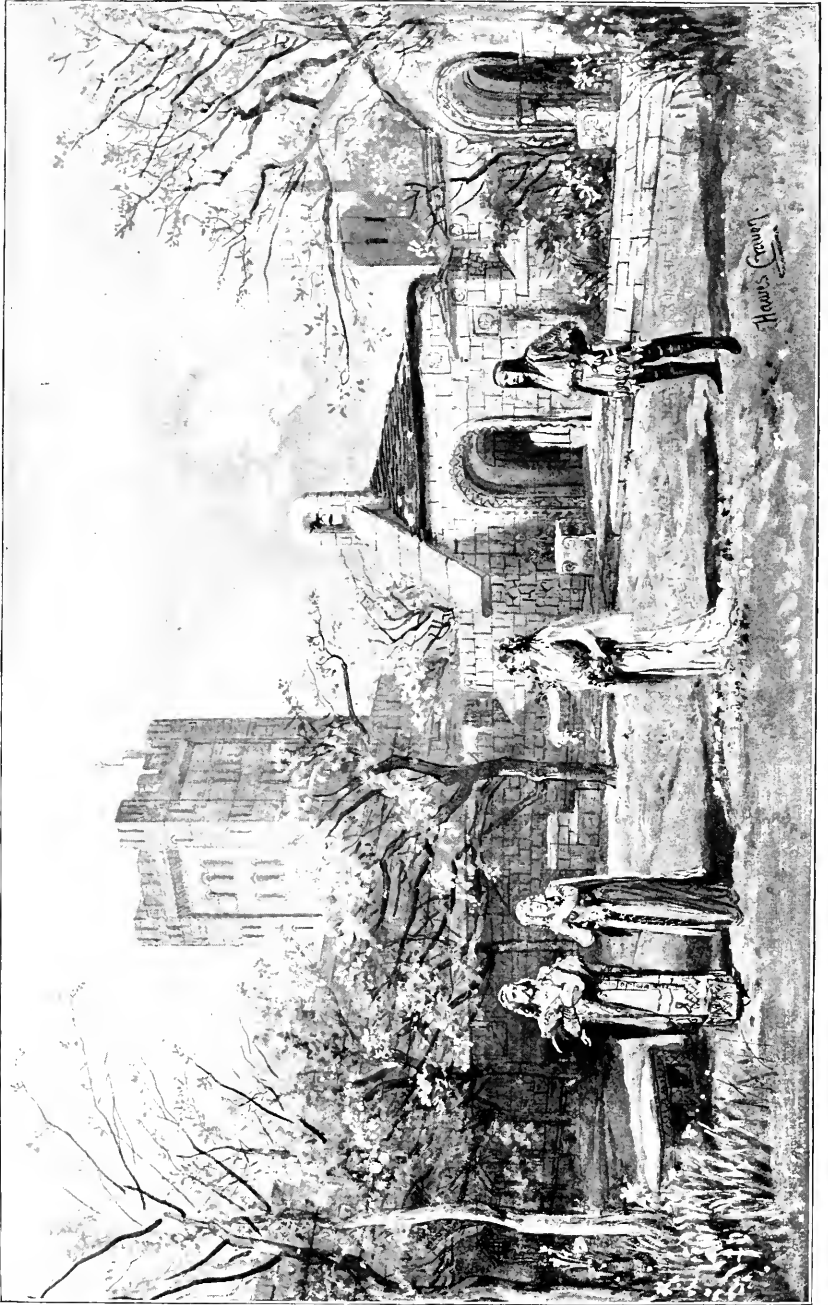
I must be cruel, only to be kind :

Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.—

Mother, good-night. [*Exit* QUEEN.] Indeed, this
counsellor

Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.

Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.





ACT IV.

The Orchard.

Enter QUEEN and HORATIO.

Queen :



WILL not speak with her.

Hor. She is importunate, indeed, distract :

Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have ?

Hor. She speaks much of her father ; says, she hears

There's tricks i' the world ; and hems, and beats her heart ;

Spurns enviously at straws ; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense :

'T were good she were spoken with, for she may strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

Queen. Let her come in. *[Exit* HORATIO.

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss :
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter HORATIO, *with* OPHELIA.

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark ?

Queen. How now, Ophelia ?

Oph. [*Sings.*] "How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff
And his sandal shoon."

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark. [*Sings.*

"He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone."

O, oh!

Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia——

Oph. Pray you, mark. [*Sings.*

"White his shroud as the mountain snow"—

Enter KING.

Queen. Alas! look here, my lord.

Oph. "Larded with sweet flowers; [*Sings.*
Which bewept to the grave did go,
With true-love showers."

King. How do ye, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God dild you! They say, the owl was
a baker's daughter. Lord! we know what we are,
but know not what we may be. God be at your
table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray you, let 's have no words of this; but
when they ask you what it means, say you this:

[*Sings.*

"To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.
Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more."

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, la, without an oath, I'll make an end on 't.

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be patient, but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good-night, ladies; good-night, sweet ladies; good-night, good-night. *[Exit.]*

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. *[Exit HORATIO.]*

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. And now, behold,
O Gertrude, Gertrude!
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions. *[A noise within.]*

Queen. Alack, what noise is this?

Enter MARCELLUS.

King. What is the matter?

Mar. Save yourself, my lord:
The young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
They cry, "Choose we; Laertes shall be king!"
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
"Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!"

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!

[Noise within.]

Enter LAERTES, armed.

Laer. Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all without.

Danes. No, let's come in. *[Off.]*

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

Danes. We will, we will. [*Off.*

Laer. I thank you : keep the door.—O thou vile king,

Give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laer. That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?—
Let him go, Gertrude ; do not fear our person :
There's such divinity doth hedge a king
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will.—Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incensed.—Let him go, Gertrude.—

Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father ?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead ? I'll not be juggled with.

To hell, allegiance ! vows, to the blackest devil !
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit !
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes ; only I'll be revenged
Most throughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you ?

Laer. My will, not all the world :
And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye.

Re-enter OPHELIA.

Laer. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—
O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?

Oph. "They bore him barefaced on the bier;
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny:
And in his grave rained many a tear,"—
Fare you well, my dove.

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade
revenge,
It could not move thus.

Oph. You must sing, "Down a-down, an you call
him a-down-a." O, how the wheel becomes it! It
is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;
pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies,
that's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness,—thoughts and
remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines;—
there's rue for you; and here's some for me: we
may call it herb of grace o' Sundays:—O, you must
wear your rue with a difference.—There's a daisy:
I would give you some violets; but they withered
all when my father died.—They say, he made a
good end,—

"For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy."—

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

Oph. "And will he not come again?
And will he not come again?"

No, no, he is dead:
Go to thy death-bed:
He never will come again.

His beard as white as snow,
 All flaxen was his poll;
 He is gone, he is gone,
 And we cast away moan :
 God ha' mercy on his soul !”

And of all Christian souls, I pray God.
 God buy you!

[*Exit.*

Laer. Do you see this? O God!

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
 Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
 Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
 And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.
 If by direct or by collateral hand
 They find us touched, we will our kingdom give,
 Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
 To you in satisfaction; but if not,
 Be you content to lend your patience to us,
 And we shall jointly labour with your soul
 To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so :
 His means of death, his obscure burial,—
 Cry to be heard, as 't were from heaven to earth,
 That I must call 't in question.

King. So you shall ;
 And where the offence is, let the great axe fall.
 Hamlet, that hath your noble father slain,
 Pursued my life.
 Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
 And you must put me in your heart for friend.

Enter a Messenger.

How now! what news?

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not:

King.— Laertes, you shall hear them.—
Leave us. [Exit Messenger.]

[Reads.] “High and mighty,—you shall know, I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow, shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes; when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasions of my sudden and more strange return.

“HAMLET.”

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character.

Can you advise me?

Laer. I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come: It warms the very sickness in my heart, That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
“Thus diddest thou.”

King. Will you be ruled by me?

Laer. Aye, my lord;

So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace.—I will work him To an exploit now ripe in my device, Under the which he shall not choose but fall; And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe, But even his mother shall uncharge the practice, And call it accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be ruled;
The rather, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.

King. Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy,
He made confession of you;
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence,
That he cried out, 't would be a sight indeed
If one could match you.

Sir, this report of his

Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this,—

Laer. What out of this, my lord ?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you ?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart ?

Laer. Why ask you this ?

King. Hamlet comes back ; what would you
undertake,
To show yourself your father's son in deed,
More than in words ?

Laer. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarise ;
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
Bring you, in fine, together,
And wager on your heads : he, being remiss,
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils ; so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and, in a pass of practice,
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do 't ;
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.

King. Let's further think of this ;
Soft—let me see—
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings,
I ha 't ;
When in your motion you are hot and dry,
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him
A chalice for the nonce ; whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck
Our purpose may hold there. But stay ! what
noise ?

Enter QUEEN.

How now, sweet queen ?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow. Your sister's drowned, Laertes.

Laer. Drowned!—O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she come,
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples.
There, on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up,
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas, then, is she drowned?

Queen. Drowned, drowned.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord!
I have a speech of fire that fain would blaze,
But that this folly douts it.

Enter Courtiers, carrying OPHELIA on a bier.

Curtain.



ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Churchyard.*

Enter two Clowns, with spades and mattocks.

1st Clown :



Is she to be buried in Christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation ?

2nd Clo. I tell thee, she is ; and therefore make her grave straight : the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it

Christian burial.

1st Clo. How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence ?

2nd Clo. Why, 't is found so.

1st Clo. It must be *se offendendo* ; it cannot be else. For here lies the point : if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act : and an act hath three branches ; it is, to act, to do, and to perform : argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2nd Clo. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.—

1st Clo. Give me leave. Here lies the water ; good : here stands the man ; good : if the man go to this water and drown himself, it is will he nill he, he goes ; mark you that : but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself : argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

2nd Clo. But is this law ?

1st Clo. Ay, marry, is't, crowner's quest-law.

2nd Clo. Will you ha' the truth on't ? If this had

not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial.

1st Clo. Why, there thou say'st; and the more pity, that great folk shall have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even-Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2nd Clo. Was he a gentleman?

1st Clo. He was the first that ever bore arms.

2nd Clo. Why, he had none.

1st Clo. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says, Adam digged: could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself——

2nd Clo. Go to.

1st Clo. What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2nd Clo. The gallows-maker; for that frame out-lives a thousand tenants.

1st Clo. I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now, thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again; come.

2nd Clo. Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1st Clo. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2nd Clo. Marry, now I can tell.

1st Clo. To't.

2nd Clo. Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.

1st Clo. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating;

and, when you are asked this question next, say, a grave-maker: the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor. *[Exit 2nd Clown.]*

1st Clown *digs, and sings.*

“ In youth, when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet :
To contract, O, the time, for-a my behove,
O, methought, there was nothing-a meet.”

Ham. Hath this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making ?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'T is e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1st *Clo.* “ But age, with his stealing steps, *[Sings.]*
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me into the land,
As if I had never been such.”

[Throws up a skull.]

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches, one that would circumvent God, might it not ?

Hor. It might, my lord.

1st *Clo.* “ A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade, *[Sings.]*
For and a shrouding sheet :
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.”

[Throws up another skull.]

Ham. There's another: why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock

him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave 's this, sir?

1st Clo. Mine, sir.

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

1st Clo. You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore it is not yours; for my part, I do not lie in 't, and yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't and say it is thine; 't is for the dead, not for the quick; therefore, thou liest.

1st Clo. 'T is a quick lie, sir; 't will away again from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

1st Clo. For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman, then?

1st Clo. For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in 't?

1st Clo. One that was a woman, sir, but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1st Clo. Of all the days i' the year, I came to 't that day that our last King Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long is that since?

1st Clo. Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that. It was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry; why was he sent into England?

1st Clo. Why, because a was mad; a shall recover his wits there; or, if a do not, 't is no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

1st Clo. 'T will not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad ?

1st Clo. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely ?

1st Clo. 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground ?

1st Clo. Why, here in Denmark : I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' th' earth ere he rot ?

1st Clo. I' faith, he will last you some eight year, or nine year : a tanner will last you nine year,

Ham. Why he more than another ?

1st Clo. Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that a' will keep out water a great while : and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull, now ; this skull hath lain you i' the earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it ?

1st Clo. A whoreson mad fellow's it was : whose do you think it was ?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

1st Clo. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue ! à poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, this same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Ham. This ?

1st Clo. E'en that.

Ham. Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick !—I knew him, Horatio : a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy : he hath borne me on his back a thousand times ; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is ! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now ? your gambols ? your songs ? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar ? Not one now, to mock your own grinning ? quite chap-fallen. Now,

get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think, Alexander looked o' this fashion i' th' earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah! [*Puts down the skull.*]

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio!
 "Imperious Cæsar, dead, and turned to clay,
 Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
 O! that that earth which kept the world in awe
 Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!"
 But soft, but soft! aside:—here comes the king,

*Enter Priests, &c., in procession; the Corse
 of OPHELIA, LAERTES and Mourners
 following; KING, QUEEN, their Trains,
 &c.*

The queen, the courtiers. Who is that they follow,
 And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken,
 The corse they follow did with desperate hand
 Fordo its own life; 't was of some estate.
 Couch we awhile, and mark.

[*Retiring with HORATIO.*]

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes.

A very noble youth: mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarged
 As we have warrantise: her death was doubtful;
 And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
 She should in ground unsanctified have lodged:
 Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,

Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done ?

Priest. No more be done :
We should profane the service of the dead
To sing a requiem and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i' th' earth ;
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring !—I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministring angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia !

Queen. Sweets to the sweet : farewell.

[*Scattering flowers.*]

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife :
I thought thy bride-bed to have decked, sweet maid,
And not have strewed thy grave.

Laer. O, treble woe,
Fall ten times treble on that curséd head
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Deprived thee of !—Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms :

[*Leaps into the grave.*]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made
To o'er-top old Pelion or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*Advancing.*] What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis ? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them
stand,

Like wonder-wounded hearers ? This is I,
Hamlet the Dane.

Laer. The devil take thy soul !

[*Leaping out of grave and grappling with him.*]

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.

I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat ;
 For though I am not splenitive and rash,
 Yet have I something in me dangerous,
 Which let thy wisdom fear. Away thy hand !

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet ! Hamlet !

All. Gentlemen,—

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them*

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
 Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son, what theme ?

Ham. I loved Ophelia : forty thousand brothers
 Could not, with all their quantity of love,
 Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her ?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. 'Swounds ! show me what thou 'lt do :
 Woo't weep ? woo't fight ? woo't fast ? woo't tear
 thyself ?

Woo't drink up Esill ? eat a crocodile ?

I'll do 't.—Dost thou come here to whine,

To outface me with leaping in her grave,

Be buried quick with her, and so will I :

And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw

Millions of acres on us, till our ground,

Singeing his pate against the burning zone,

Make Ossa like a wart ! Nay, an thou 'lt mouth,

I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness :

And thus awhile the fit will work on him ;

Anon, as patient as the female dove

When that her golden couplet are disclos'd,

His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir :

What is the reason that you use me thus ?

I loved you ever : but it is no matter :

Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon
him.— [*Exit* HORATIO.

[*To* LAERTES.] Strengthen your patience in our
last night's speech ;

We'll put the matter to the present push.—

This grave shall have a living monument :

An hour of quiet shortly shall we see ;

Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt*

SCENE 2.—*A Room in the Castle.*

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.

Ham. But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself ;
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace, who comes here ?

Enter OSRICK.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to
Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this
water-fly ?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure,
I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of
spirit. Put your bonnet to its right use ; 't is for
the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 't is very cold ; the wind is
northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry, and hot, or my complexion.

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as 't were,—I cannot tell how.—But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head: sir, this is the matter,—

Ham. I beseech you, remember—

[HAMLET moves him to put on his hat.]

Osr. Nay, in good faith; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society, and great showing: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know you are not ignorant—of what excellence Laertes is—I mean, sir, for his weapon.

Ham. What 's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That 's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so. Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers. The king, sir, hath laid, sir, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you

three hits; he hath laid on twelve for nine; and that would come to immediate trial if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How if I answer, no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me, let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him if I can: if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Ham. Yours, yours. [Exit OSRICK.]

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so: since he went into France I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. Thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord,—

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike anything, obey it; I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury: there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 't is not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.

SCENE 3.—*A Hall in the Castle.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, Lords, OSRICK, and Attendants, *with foils, &c.*

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The KING puts the hand of LAERTES into that of HAMLET.*]

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong;

But pardon 't as you are a gentleman.

Sir, in this audience,

Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil

Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,

That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,

And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied,
And do receive your offered love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;
And will this brother's wager frankly pay.—
Give us the foils.—Come on.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osrick.—Cousin
Hamlet,
You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it: I have seen you both;
But since he's bettered, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy; let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well. These foils have all a length? [*They prepare to play.*]

Osr. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table—
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire:
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath:
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the
cups;

And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
“Now the King drinks to Hamlet!”—Come,
begin;—

And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*]

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment.

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well:—Again,

King. Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl
is thine;

Here's to thy health.—Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*]

Ham. I'll play this bout first: set it by awhile.

Come.—[*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy
brows:

The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham. Good madam!

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord : I pray you, pardon me.

King. [*Aside.*] It is the poisoned cup : it is too late.

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam ; by-and-by.

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think it.

Laer. [*Aside.*] And yet it is almost against my conscience.

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes. You but dally :

I pray you, pass with your best violence.

I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

Laer. Say you so ? come on. [*They play.*]

Osr. Nothing, neither way.

Laer. Have at you now.

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET ; then, in scuffling they change rapiers, and HAMLET wounds LAERTES.*]

King. Part them ! they are incensed.

Ham. Nay, come again. [*The QUEEN falls.*]

Osr. Look to the Queen there, ho !

Hor. They bleed on both sides.—How is it, my lord ?

Osr. How is 't Laertes ?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osrick ;

I am justly killed with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the Queen ?

King. She swoonds to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet !

The drink, the drink ! I am poison'd. [*Dies.*]

Ham. O villainy !—Ho, let the door be lock'd !

Treachery ! seek it out. [*LAERTES falls.*]

Laer. It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain ;
In thee there is not half an hour of life ;

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
 Unbated and envenomed. Thy mother's poisoned.
 I can no more. The King, the King's to blame.

Ham. The point envenomed, too!

Then, venom, to thy work! [*Stabs the KING.*]

King. O, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.

Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damnéd
 Dane,

Drink off this potion:—is thy union here?

Follow my mother. [*KING dies.*]

Laer. Exchange forgiveness with me, noble
 Hamlet;

Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
 Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*]

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.

I am dead, Horatio—wretched queen, adieu!—

Thou liv'st: report me and my cause aright

To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it.

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane;

Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou'rt a man,

Give me the cup: let go; by Heaven, I'll have it—

O good Horatio, what a wounded name,

Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,

Absent thee from felicity awhile,

And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain

To tell my story. [*March afar off, and shot within.*]

What warlike noise is this?

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from
 Poland,

To the ambassadors of England gives

This warlike volley.

Ham. O, I die, Horatio;

The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:

I cannot live to hear the news from England;

But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras : he has my dying voice ;
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited—The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart.—Good-night,
sweet prince ;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest !
[March within.

Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors, and others.

For. Where is this sight ?

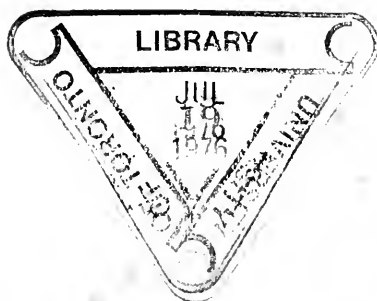
Hor. What is it ye would see ?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world,
How these things came about.

For. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience ;
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune :
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage ;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally : and for his passage,
The soldiers' music, and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him.
Take up the bodies.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.



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